

Message Text

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PAGE 01 USBERL 00011 051531Z

43

ACTION CU-03

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TO AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY

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AMEMBASSY PARIS

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USBERLIN 0011

E O 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, WB, GW, UR

SUBJ: SPEED SKATING CHAMPIONSHIPS IN BERLIN

REFS: 75 BONN 15713, 75 USBERLIN 1943, 75 BONN 15549

1. REPORTS IN LOCAL PRESS JANUARY 2 TO EFFECT THAT SOVIETS HAD WRITTEN TO INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION COMPLAINING THAT WORLD SPEED SKATING CHAMPIONSHIPS SCHEDULED TO BE HELD IN BERLIN MARCH 6-7 WOULD BE "ILLEGAL" AND INSISTING ON SEPARATE INVITATION FROM SENAT AS CONDITION FOR SOVIET PARTICIPATION (REFERENCE APPARENTLY TO BLINOV LETTER OF AUGUST 13 QUOTED BONN 15549) HAVE OBLIGED SENAT TO COME TO GRIPS WITH ISSUE DISCUSSED REFTELS. SOVIET LETTER HAS BEEN PLACED ON AGENDA FOR REGULAR SENAT SESSION JANUARY 6, AND ON FOLLOWING DAY SENAT REPRESENTATIVES PLAN TO BROACH MATTER WITH LANDESSPORTBUND. IN MEANTIME, CONTRADICTION VOICES HAVE BEEN HEARD WITHIN SPD-FDP COALITION. SENAT PRESS SPOKESMAN STRUVE WAS QUOTED JANUARY 3 AS SAYING THAT THERE WAS STRONG SENTIMENT WITHIN SENAT IN FAVOR OF SENDING ADDITIONAL INVITATION TO SOVIETS. ON OTHER
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PAGE 02 USBERL 00011 051531Z

HAND, SENATOR FOR LABOR KORBER (BERLIN REPRESENTATIVE IN

INNER-GERMAN SPORTS TALKS) CHARACTERIZED SUCH A STEP AS "PLAIN SILLY", AND MAJOR OXFORD DECLARED THAT QA MADE NO PROVISION FOR SEPARATE SENAT INVITATIONS FOR SPORTS EVENTS IN BERLIN. ACTING CDU CAUCUS CHAIRMAN SCHMITZ CRITICIZED THIS INDECISION WITHIN SENAT AS EXAMPLE OF "HELPLESSNESS" OF COALITION'S BERLIN POLICY, AND PROMISED THAT OPPOSITION WOULD TAKE PARLIAMENTARY STEPS TO FORCE SENAT TO TAKE "CLEAR AND UNEQUIVOCAL" POSITION. DER TAGESSPIEGEL HAS HYPOTHESIZED ON BASIS INFORMED SOURCES THAT SENAT WOULD SEEK COMPROMISE ARRANGEMENT WHEREBY SEPARATE INVITATION WOULD BE SENT TO ALL PARTICIPATING STATES OR, ALTERNATIVELY, GOVERNING MAYOR SCHUETZ WOULD SEND LETTER OF UNDORSEMENT TO INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION.

2. WE ARE UNCERTAIN AS TO PRESENT STATUS OF THIS ISSUE IN BONN, LAST MOVE THAT WE CAN RECALL BEING DELIVERY OF BRIEF PAPER ON SUBJECT BY FRG REPRESENTATIVE AT OCTOBER 23 BONN GROUP MEETING. WE CONCUR WITH VIEW EXPRESSED BONN 15713 THAT DECISION IS ESSENTIALLY ONE FOR GERMANS TO TAKE, ALTHOUGH WE ARE ALSO IN AGREEMENT THAT ACCEPTANCE OF DOUBLE INVITATION PROCEDURE IN CASES SUCH AS THIS WOULD BE LESS HARMFUL THAN PROBABLY LONG-TERM DECLINE OF BERLIN AS INTERNATIONAL SPORTS CENTER IN FACE OF CONTINUAL SOVIET BLOC BOYCOTTS. UNLESS ADVISED TO CONTRARY, WE WOULD NOT PLAN TO INTERVENE WITH SENAT ON ISSUE.

3. LOCAL PRESS HAS REPORTED, INCIDENTALLY, THAT GERMAN ICE SPORTS UNION SOUGHT TO MEET POSSIBLE SOVIET BLOC OBJECTIONS IN ADVANCE BY USING FOLLOWING INVITATION FORMULA: "THE GERMAN SPEED SKATING ASSOCIATION AND THE BERLIN ICE SPORTS UNION ON BEHALF OF THE GERMAN ICE SPORTS UNION..." SENATOR KORBER WAS QUOTED TO EFFECT THAT THIS FORMULA FULFILLED ALL CONDITIONS FOR PROPER INVITATION TO CHAMPIONSHIPS. GEORGE

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